**Western District Conference Hope Fund**

***Support for WDC congregations in response to natural disasters and other emergencies***

**Purpose and guidelines for the WDC Hope Fund:**

The purpose of the WDC Hope Fund is to provide immediate financial assistance to WDC congregations and church plants in the face of natural disaster or other emergencies.

Grants from the WDC Hope Fund may be used for expenses such as repairs, rent, utilities, assistance for congregation members and neighbors, pastoral support, food and transportation. Congregations may also use this assistance to match Everence Sharing Funds according to Everence guidelines.

In the face of emergency needs, congregations may apply for assistance grants of up to $1000 from the WDC Hope Fund. Grant amounts will be subject to availability of funds. Multiple grant applications from a congregation may be considered, but new applications from other congregations may be given priority.

Congregations may submit grant applications online at <https://mennowdc.org/wdc-hope-fund-response-to-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>, print (see below), or download form to complete and return by e-mail to wdc@mennowdc.org or to PO Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117.

WDC Hope Fund grants will be authorized by the Conference Minister in consultation with the Executive Committee, based on congregations’ application describing the need. To be eligible for a grant, congregations must designate both a treasurer and another congregational leader (other than the pastor).

**Support for the WDC Hope Fund:**

The WDC Hope Fund is replenished by above-budget contributions by congregations and individual donors, and grants.

Contributions to the WDC Hope Fund should be made to WDC and designated “Hope Fund. ” Contributions may be given online at <https://mennowdc.org> (click on “Donate to WDC”) or by sending a check to WDC at PO Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117. Gifts to the WDC Hope Fund are tax deductible.

Contributions to the WDC Hope Fund are considered above and beyond regular giving to the WDC budget, which supports ongoing staff and resourcing for congregations and leaders during both routine and emergency times.

**History of the WDC Hope Fund:**

On April 4, 2020 the Executive Board of the Western District Conference approved the establishment of a Hope Fund. This new fund was announced to the WDC in the conference-wide communication, S*prouts,* on April 7, 2020.

The WDC Hope Fund was established to support congregations and ministers in direct response to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Funds were sought to respond to the most vulnerable by empowering local congregations to meet needs with Christ’s love and generosity in a time of fear and anxiety.

During the week of February 14, 2021, it became apparent that the severe winter weather in the southern regions of the WDC led to additional hardships and emergencies. The resulting power outages, water shortages, need for emergency shelter, and loss of work and income exacerbated the vulnerabilities and risks of the ongoing COVID pandemic.

In the face of these needs, and in anticipation of future needs beyond the pandemic, conference leadership decided that the WDC Hope Fund should be expanded to include assistance to other emergencies beyond its original focus. WDC Hope Fund grants became available for assistance in the face of natural disasters and other emergencies.

In Fall 2023, the Hope Fund Task Force recommended that the task force be disbanded due to the diminished need for pandemic response. The Executive Board approved this recommendation, and maintained responsibility for the WDC Hope Fund as a vehicle to assist congregations with financial needs following natural disasters or other emergencies.

*Revision approved by WDC Executive Board January 20, 2024*

**Western District Conference Hope Fund: *Support for WDC congregations and ministers in response to natural disasters and other emergencies***

**Congregational Application Form**

Congregation name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Meeting place (if different from mailing address): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer name and contact information: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Congregational leader name and contact information: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Pastor name and contact information: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Grant funds requested and purpose (list dollar-amounts and description of expenses, ie, repairs, food, shelter, rent, utilities, pastoral support, transportation, etc).

Congregational expenses:

$\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

$\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

$\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

$\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

$\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

$\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = TOTAL Hope Fund grant request (up to $1,000)

**Send application or questions to WDC at** **wdc@mennowdc.org** **or PO Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117.**

-------------------

Congregations are also encouraged to apply for Everence Sharing Funds if eligible. For more information contact Everence at (800) 348-7468 or SharingFund@everence.com, or see <https://www.everence.com/living-the-values/everence-sharing-fund>

*20 Jan 2024*